Re-alignment of N.H.-31

373. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to refer to the Unstarred Question 2355 given in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd December, 2004 and state:

(a) whether the 2nd revised cost estimate for re-alignment of N.H.-31 from Falakata to Pundibari in Cooch Behar, West Bengal has been approved; and

(b) if so, by when the work is likely to start?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The 2nd Revised Cost Estimate amounting to Rs. 60529 crore had been sanctioned on 25th January 2006.

(b) The project comprises two packages. Package-I is for construction of major bridge across river Torsa and Package-II is for construction of 22.89 km. long road including approaches to the Torsa Bridge and construction of seven minor bridges. The work is being implemented by the State Government. As per sanction of 2nd Revised Cost Estimate, the tender for Package-I was to be re-invited after rescinding the existing contract agreement with M/s National Project Construction Company Limited, by the State Government, due to slow progress of the work. As informed by the State Government, the matter is *sub judice* and fresh tender could not be floated. The contractor of Package-II has been asked by the State Government for mobilization of all machinery.

Funds allocated for Golden Quadrilateral Project

374. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total funds allocated for the Golden Quadrilateral Project during the last two years, till date;

(b) whether Government have fixed any target under the said project during 2005-06 and 2006-07;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which the above targets have been achieved;

(d) whether funds allocated for the said projects were sufficient to meet the expenditure;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps being taken by Government for implementation of the project at a faster pace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Funds are not being allocated separately for Golden Quadrilateral Project.

(b) and (c) The target fixed for Golden Quadrilateral during 2005-06 and 2006-07 and the achievement against the target as per Action Plan is as under:—

Golden Quadrilateral	2005-06	2006-07
Target	782.00 km.	380.00 km.
Achievement	582.82 km.	131.00 km. (upto June, 2006)

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Steps taken to expedite the projects are indicated in the Statement enclosed.

Steps taken to expedite the projects

The following steps have been taken to ensure early completion of the project:—

(a) The Contracts are regularly monitored at various levels such as by Supervision Consultants/Project Directors, Senior Officers of NHAI. Progress reviews are also help at the level of Chairman, National Highways Authority of India, Secretary, Department of Road Transport and Highways and Minister, Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways.

(b) State Government have appointed senior officers as nodal officers for resolving problems associated with implementation of the National

Highways Development Project such as land acquisition, removal of utilities, forest/pollution/environment clearances etc. These nodal officers hold periodic meetings to review the projects and take action to resolve the problems.

(c) A Committee of Secretaries has been constituted under Cabinet Secretary to address inter-ministerial and Centre-State issues such as land acquisition, utility shifting, environment approvals, clearance of Road Over Bridges etc.

(d) The procedure of issue of land acquisition notifications has now been simplified.

(e) To expedite the construction of Road Over Bridges, an officer of the Railways has been posted to National Highways Authority of India to coordinate with Ministry of Railways. Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with M/s IRCON International Limited for construction of some of the Road Over Bridges.

(f) Action has been taken against non-performing contractors and they are not allowed to bid for future projects unless they improve the performance in existing contracts.

(g) Steps have been taken to improve cash flow problems of contractors by granting interest bearing discretionary advance at the request of contractor, release of retention money against bank guarantee of equal amount, deferment of recovery of advances (on interest basis) and relaxation in minimum IPC amount.

Demands OF SEZs

375. DR.M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to State:

(a) whether port related infrastructure in the country is highly inadequate to meet the demands of SEZs which are fast expanding;

(b) if so, the capacity of each port in the country, port-wise;

(c) the cargo handled by each port during the last three years, port-wise and year-wise: